

600.31 - Conservation Plan

The plan document provided to the client must be a quality document containing meaningful information for the client. It should include the following items:

1. A folder, binder, or other means to assemble the contents of the plan.
2. A conservation district cooperative agreement, where applicable.
3. A soil map with appropriate interpretations, such as land capability groupings, woodland suitability groups, pasture and hayland suitability groups, and other interpretive information regarding suitability for specific land uses.
4. Appropriate worksheets developed with the client. The worksheets should include such things as forage inventories, erosion estimates, and cost estimates.
5. Available job sheets and other prepared material applicable to the client's specific planned practices.
6. Operation and maintenance agreements and procedures. Detailed operation and maintenance procedures, depending on their extent and complexity, may be contained in a separate document, but must be referenced in the conservation plan in conjunction with the conservation system and practices contained in the plan.
7. In some cases designs may be included, however, they are generally kept in the office file under the client's name.
8. A conservation plan map. At a minimum, each map should include the following:

(a) Title block showing:

- "Conservation Plan Map"
- "Prepared with assistance from USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service" or from "_____"
- Name of the conservation district, county, and state
- Scale of the map
- Data needed to locate the specific land unit, such as section numbers, etc.
- Date prepared
- North arrow

(b) Body of map with:

- Boundary lines of the planning unit outlined
- Field boundaries
- Land use and acres for each land unit correlating to client land use in the case file
- Appropriate map symbols and a map symbol legend on the map or as an attachment using NRCS map symbols (see the National Map Symbol Handbook, Title 170, Part 601)

(c) Land use designations:

Client-specific land use designations can be used on the plan map as desired.

The NRCS land use designations are:

(1) Crop

Land used primarily for the production of field crops or orchard crops alone or in association with sod crops.

(2) Forest

Land on which the primary vegetation is forest (climax, natural, or introduced plant community) and use is primarily for production of wood products.

(3) Grazed Forest

Forest land that produces understory vegetation that is used for the production of livestock.

(4) Grazed Range

Rangeland that is used primarily for the production of domestic livestock. Includes native plant communities and those seeded to native or introduced species, or naturalized by introduced species, that are ecologically managed using range management principles.

(5) Hay

Land on which perennial plants are managed and harvested for hay. (Annual plants planted for hay, and forage crops in short-term rotation are cropland.)

(6) Headquarters

Land used for dwellings, barns, pens, corrals, or other facilities used in connection with farm and ranch operations.

(7) Mined

Land on which the soil has been disturbed by the mining of minerals.

(8) Native or Naturalized Pasture

Forest land that is used primarily for the production of forage for grazing by livestock rather than for the production of wood products. Overstory trees are removed or managed to promote the native or introduced understory vegetation occurring on the site. This vegetation is managed for its forage value through the use of grazing management principles.

(9) Natural Area

Land or water used for the preservation, protection, and observation of the existing resources, archaeological or historical interpretation, resource interpretation, or for aesthetic value. Some of these may be officially designated by legislation or other authorities.

(10) Pasture

Grazing lands composed of introduced or domesticated native forage species that are used primarily for the production of domestic livestock. They receive periodic renovation and/or cultural treatments, such as tillage, fertilization, mowing, weed control, and may be irrigated. They are not in rotation with crops.

(11) Recreation

Land and water used and managed for recreational purposes.

(12) Urban

Land occupied by buildings and related facilities used for residences, industrial sites, institutional sites, public highways, airports, and similar uses associated with towns and cities.

(13) Water

A geographic area whose dominant characteristic is open water, but which may include a large proportion of intermingled land, including coastal marsh lands.

(14) Watershed Protection

Land managed and used specifically for water production into streams, rivers, lakes, and aquifers.

(15) Wildlife

Land or water used, protected, and managed primarily as habitat for wildlife.

(d) Secondary land use, when appropriate to the client's objectives.

(1) A record of the client's decisions.

- Use reports generated electronically as applicable
- The recorded decisions will apply to land units reflecting common land use, objectives, and treatment needs (referred to as conservation management units)
- Include the appropriate land unit label, official practice name, brief description of the practice, and schedule of practice application in the proper sequence by calendar year

(2) Available maps, sketches, and designs resulting from the planning process that will be useful to the client in implementing the plan.

(3) Information reflecting site-specific effects and impacts based on on-site visits.

The NRCS case file will contain:

- Client's objectives and decisions
- Assistance notes
- Engineering notes
- Operation and maintenance agreements and plans
- Design documentation
- Documentation of applied practices
- Forms and worksheets used in developing and evaluating alternatives
- Environmental documentation
- Maps - conservation plan and soils
- Conservation district information related to the plan, and
- Other appropriate supporting documents